

A N
 Effectual Prescription
Against the ANGUISH of all
DISEASES,

And Against
 ALL OTHER AFFLICTIONS

To which the Nature of Man is Subject.

*Penn'd, and Publish'd, and Approv'd, from
 the AUTHOR's Experience of it: But more
 especially from the Experience of very many
 much Greater and Better Men, the Latchet
 of whose Shoes He is not worthy to untie.*

PSAL. XCIV. v. 12.

*Blessed is the Man whom Thou Chastenest, O Lord, and Teachest
 him in thy Law.*

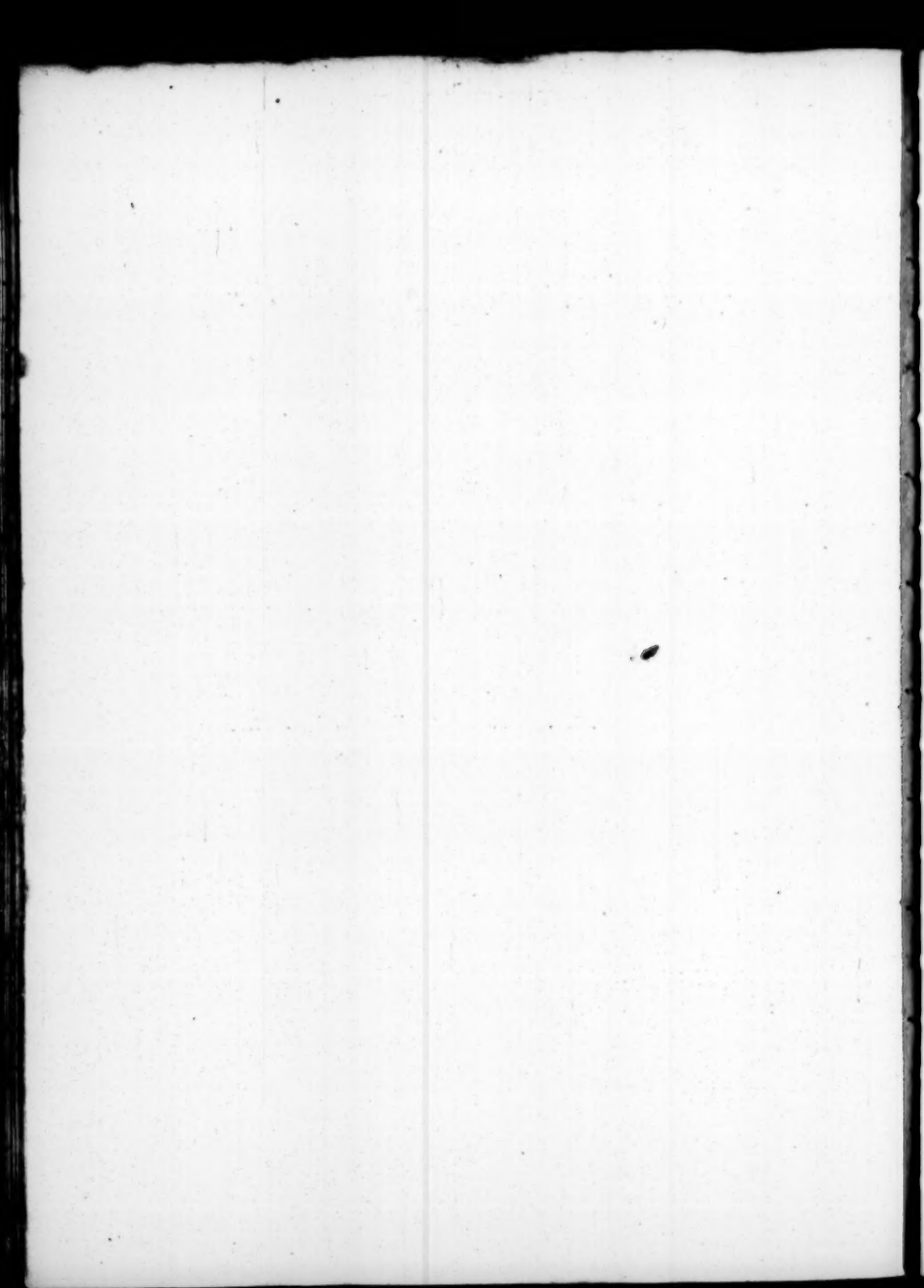
PSAL. XXX. v. 12, 13.

*Thou hast turned my Heaviness into Joy: Thou hast put off my
 Sackcloth, and girded me with Gladness.*

O my God, I will give thanks unto thee for ever.

O X F O R D,

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A N

Effectual Prescription

AGAINST

The Anguish of all Diseases, &c.

SECT. I.

AFTER my *Threefold Exhortation*, grounded upon the Exhortations as well of our Saviour, as of *St. Paul*, that Men will *Pray* Luke 18. 1. *Always*, and *without Ceasing*; I cannot better 1 Thess. 5. 17. proceed in mine own poor Opinion, than to this other Exhortation of *St. Paul* to the *Thessalonians*, that they who *pray without ceasing*, Ver. 16. will *Rejoyce evermore*: Ver. 18. And not only so, but will *in every thing give Thanks too*. For very close is the Connexion between these Paradoxes, and Duties, as I shall meet with an Occasion to shew anon. But at present 'tis my desire, to consider and insist on the strangest Exhortative of our Apostle, *Rejoyce evermore*; and to take it in such a manner for my *Text* at this time of my being Bedrid, and in pain, as not utterly to exclude its due Relations

tions unto the Context: Namely *Pray without ceasing, and in every thing give thanks.*

§. II. And if *These* last are *hard Sayings*, (as Carnal Professors may here object,) How much *harder* is the Exhortative, *that we Rejoyce evermore*? How can a Christian so wholly *learn* as to put in *practice* this Lesson, in a Fit of the *Strangury*, or of the *Stone*? in a most tormenting Paroxysm of an *Iliaca passio*, or of the *Gout*? Can Men *Rejoyce evermore*, when Hell upon Earth is broken loose in the times of such Barbarians as *Antiochus Epiphanes* was to the *Jews*, or *Dioclesian* and *Maximinus*, and *Maxentius* to the Christians, and other Tyrants of equal Cruelty too foul and many to be here nam'd? Can they *Rejoyce evermore*, whilst they are suffering under the Tortures of their being *Sawn asunder*, and tormented with an *ἐξέρισμα's* or *Excoriation of the Skin*, as some of the Martyrs we read have been? Yet such more especially were the Times, to which our Apostle doth here allude, in his Scriptural Exhortation, that as Followers and Disciples of our Lord JESUS CHRIST, we will *Rejoyce evermore*, and in all Conditions.

§. III. Now whether these words, *Rejoyce evermore*, which are confessedly *Apostolical*, contain a *Precept*, or an *Advice*; they prove it *possible* and *lawful*, for a Follower of CHRIST

to

to be *still Rejoycing*. For were it *impossible* to be done, St. Paul would be so far from *commanding* the practice of it, that he would not so much as *commend* it to us; and were the practice of it *unlawful*, he would neither *commend* nor *recommmend* it, but severely stigmatize, and forbid it rather. It follows then that we *can*, and that we *may* Rejoyce always in all Conditions; that is, with such a *true* joy as St. Paul alludes to, which is not *Carnal*, but *Spiritual*; not an *Outward*, and *Superficial*, but an *Internal* and *solid* Joy: Not the Joy of a Worldling, or of Riotous Debauchee, which stands in temporary Fits of sport and laughter; (For a vicious Man may *laugh* with an *heavy Heart*;) But the *never-failing Joy* of a sincerely *pious* Man, which ariseth from a *clean and a quiet Conscience*. *Crede mihi* (saith Seneca) *res severa est verum Gaudium*. Permanent Joy, which alone is real, is nothing else but the *serenity and satisfaction of a Man's mind*; ever at peace within it self, because it does *nil conscire sibi*, hath no false dealing, or Unfincerity to disturb it, as being *void of all offence towards God and Man*. Acts 24. 16. This alone is *True Joy*; Joy which will be *True to us*; on all occasion *stick by us*; and dwell *inseparably* with us, when *other Joys* vanish away, like the Morning Dew.

§. IV. To this it is St. *Paul* exhorteth his *Philippians*, and that with an earnest, and most affectionate ingemination. *Rejoyce in the Lord*, (c. 3. v. 1.) yea *Rejoyce in the Lord alway*, and again *I say, Rejoyce*, (c. 4. v. 4.) which Excitation to *rejoyce*, and to *rejoyce without ceasing*, and to *rejoyce in the Lord*, cannot possibly be meant of a common Joy, which like the *Wisdom of this world*, is ever *earthly* and *sensual*, and sometimes *Devilish*, such as of which our Saviour says, *Wo be to you that laugh now, for ye shall weep*. But 'tis necessarily meant of a *Ghostly Joy*, or a *Joy in the Holy-Ghost*; a Joy incessant, and without End or Interruption, especially at a time of the greatest secular Distresses, when Carnal Professors of no Integrity know not which way to turn, unless from the suffering to the persecuting side. For *then* it was that St. *Paul* exhorted his Converts to *Rejoyce*, and to *rejoyce evermore*, when they were under the *Persecutions of Jews and Gnosticks*. Then it was when he exhorted them to *Rejoyce in the Lord*. Not in things of *this World*, wherein he saw there was no *true* Rejoycing. So said he touching himself, in the 10. Verse of that Chapter, *But I rejoyced in the Lord greatly*. He rejoyced in the Lord with a *Christian Joy*; with a Joy, whereof the Lord CHRIST was the only Author, and so he rejoyced *through the Lord*,

Luke 6. 25.

Rom 14. 17.

Lord, as well as *for the Lord's sake*: which lessens any Man's wonder to find him *rejoycing in his sufferings*, there being nothing more rational, than that he should *fill up what was* * *behind of the sufferings of Christ with exceeding Joy*, because he could not but *rejoyce in his being made perfect*, who was to be *perfected* through sufferings, as the *Captain of his Salvation* had been before him. * ἀντισταθύν-
σαι τὰ ὑστερή-
ματα, Coloss.
1. 24.
Hebr. 2. 10.

§. V. 'Tis the Perfection of a *True Christian*, and 'tis his *Reward* in this World, (as well as *Duty*,) thus to be able (with *St. Paul*) to *Rejoyce evermore* in the worst of times; *in what-soever state he is, therewith to be content*: to be as free from perturbation in the midst of all hardships and tribulations, as the Prophet *Jonah* was in a time of shipwreck; never fuller of tranquillity, than in the most stormy wind and tempest; nor at any time safer, than in the Belly of the *Leviathan*. And tho' there are who have written Books, whereby to teach Men *the Art* of Rejoycing always, *the Art* of attaining to this Perfection, not only in *CHRIST's*, but in the *Stoicks* School also; yet 'tis no where attainable by human Means, without the Cooperation of the *Assisting Grace* of God, where the Grace of God *Preventing* hath gone before it. *Epictetus*, and *Arrian*, *Plato*, and *Plotinus*, *Hierocles*, and *Seneca*,
are.

* Sub Phz-
donis mitti-
um apud
Aug. Mas-
card. Diff.
2. p. 22, 23,
24. Et in
suo Charide-
mo Prolusio
Ethic. 3. p.
46.

Psal. 94. 19.

are no contemptible Instructors, even in this Divine Art of Framing an Heaven upon Earth. And St. *Paul* might have *profited* in that sort of Learning by some of *them*, having been conyerfant in the Writings of *Epimenides*, and *Menander*, and in all probability of *Plato* also; of whose * *Apologue* I am minded, by the subject I am upon. For when *Volupia* and *Angerona*, those Heathen Goddeses of *Joy* and *Sorrow* which he derided, were still at odds, and impatient of an Agreement, *God* (says the Mythologist) *ty'd them together by the Necks*; that if they would not be friends, they might be forced to be *Companions*. A *Fable* I should not here mention, but for the *Pertinent Moral* of it; That *God* is able to reconcile the greatest Opposites in Nature; Pain and Pleasure, Joy and Sorrow, Prosperity and Affliction, in the Soul of any Prudent and Pious Man. And accordingly, when 'twas said by the Royal Prophet, That *in the multitude of the sorrows which he had in his heart, the comforts of God did refresh his soul*; he spake and acted as Inspired by the *Holy Ghost the Comforter*. Comforts he had in the *midst* a multitude of sorrows; and in the midst of *those* sorrows which he had in his *Heart* too: wherein the Comforter from above did not only *Refresh*, but *Delight* his Soul, (for so our New

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Translation hath it.) And even the Carnal Man will grant, that the *Pleasure of the Soul is the Soul of Pleasure*. I say, St. Paul might have profited by some of those Heathen Writers whom he professeth to have perused: But 'twas by *Christ*, and *Christ alone*, by whom he grew *perfect* in his Lesson, to be content in all Cases. A Lesson he had *learned* (he tells us plainly) and been thoroughly *Instructed* in; It was not got without *Study*, nor yet without going to School to his *Master Christ*; who did not only enrich him with *Light* and *Knowledge* of all his Duties, but (which *no other* Master could do) gave him *Ability* to perform them. For having told us what he had *learned*, and how far he had been *instructed*, every where, and in all things both to be full, and to be hungry, both to abound, and to suffer need; He immediately added, that all his sufficiencies were of *Christ*; not of *Pythagoras*, or of *Zeno*, or of any other Teacher, or of himself: But, saith he, *I can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth me*. As our Rejoycing must be in him, so by him and his strength, shewing it self in our *Weakness*; through him and his wisdom, shewing it self in our Folly; with his Power and *All-sufficiency*, shewing it self in our Wants and Imperfections; we can rejoyce evermore, and in all conditions.

Phil. 4. 11,
12.

Phil. 4. 13.

§. VI. But now however the glorious Grace of our Lord JESUS CHRIST is very sufficient of it self to make us perfect in St. *Paul's* Lesson, *to be abased, and to abound, and in all stations to be content*; and will never be wanting unto us, but when we are wanting unto *it*, and when we are wanting unto *our selves*; Yet he expects and requires, *that we negotiate* with the Talents entrusted to us, the Talent of *Reason*, as well as *Grace*. He expects *that we work out our own Salvation*; he expects that we *stir up his Grace within us*; that we labour and cooperate, and *work together with him*, (whilst he *worketh in us both to will and to do*,) *that we receive not his Grace in vain*. The Art of *Contentment and Rejoycing* doth not cease to be an Art, by being a *Divine* and a *Christian Art*. Nor are the Rules of it the worse, for being taught in the School of *Reason*. And so 'tis pertinent to consider, how far the Rule of *Epictetus* may conduce to our Proficiency, whilst we con St. *Paul's* Lesson. ταράττει ἡμᾶς ἔ τὰ πράγματα, ἀλλὰ τὰ περὶ τῶν πραγμάτων λόγματα. *Our troubles do not arise from things themselves, but from our opinions of them*. Let us rectify our opinions, concerning those things which are *within* our own Power, and those other things which are quite *without* it; and then instead of labour in vain to bring our condition to our

our minds, (which most Men do, tho' tis impossible to be done) we shall employ our selves intirely in bringing our minds to our condition. At which pitch if we arrive, we are qualified with our Apostle to *Rejoyce evermore*. Whereas for want of this Attainment, no such thing as *True Joy* is to be had, or so much as hoped for, whilst we are in this uncertain and fickle World.

§. VII. The very Basis and Foundation of all our Contentments upon Earth, is either the *Clearness* of our *Knowledge*, or rather the *Rectitude* of our *Faith*, as 'tis the *Ratio formalis*, the Soul and *Life* of our Religion. A firm *Belief that God is, and that he is a Rewarder of them that diligently seek him*: A Heb. 11. 6. firm Belief without wavering, that God who was the *Creator*, is still the *Preserver* of all the World; and as the *Preserver*, so the *Governour*, the *Director*, the *Methodizer*, and *Disposer*, of all things in it. A firm Belief without doubting, that nothing *does* or *can* happen without his *Will*; his Will to *effect*, or his Will to *suffer it*; his Will to *do*, or *not to hinder* its being *done*: and that in all the *Will of God* there is *perfect Wisdom*: whether his Will is *Absolute*, or only *Respective*, and *Conditional*; still 'tis infinitely *Holy, Just* and Rom. 7. 12. *Good*.

Good. All which imports an Infinite, and Perfect *Wisdom*.

§. VIII. This *Belief* being settled and fixt within us, makes us *wait* on God's *Providence*; *Acquiesce* in his *Will*, and *Adore* his *Wisdom*. So as in all Events to say, (and that from the Heart, and not only from the Teeth outward,) *God's Will be done*. The worth of this Acquiescence in the Good *Will* of God, was clearly seen by *blind Homer*, in comparison with whom *Titular Christians* are in the *Dark*, who think that God cannot *see*, or at least that he will not *punish* their Dissatisfactions in his Oeconomie. Διὸς δ' ἐτελείετο βουλή, was *Homer's* saying, and 'twas a good one. *God's Will was done* in this, or that which is come to pass. But *they* said better, who said in their *Submission* to God's Appointment touching Saint *Paul* and his sufferings, fore-told by the Prophet *Agabus*, Κυρίῳ τὸ θέλημα γινέσθω, *The Will of the Lord be done*. But much better yet said the *Man Christ Jesus*, who said in the Agonie of his Soul, when it was sorrowful even to death, ὅτι ὡς ἐγὼ θέλω, ἀλλ' ὡς σὺ. *Not as I, but as thou wilt*; or *not my Will, but thy Will be done*. He had pray'd as a *Man*, the Bitter Cup might pass from him; but when he considered that he must drink it, and for the Health of Mankind too, he deprecated his
Prayer

Acts 21. 14.

Mat. 26. 38.

Prayer, not at all his *Persecution* ; He pray'd his Prayer might not be heard ; and that he might not have *his own Will*, according to his Humane Nature : But (said he to God the Father, v. 42.) γενήσῃ τὸ θέλημα σου. *Thy Will be done*. Now he who can say with Good old *Eli* in all afflictions, *It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good* ; and with King *Hezekiah*, when Death it self is denounced to him, *Good is the word of the Lord, which thou hast spoken* ; and with *Job* embracing a Dunghil, when reduced from all his Riches unto his Pot-herd and his Boyles by God's Permission, *Tho' he kill me, yet will I trust in him, tho' he deprive me of all I have, I will bless his Name*. *Job 13. 15*
 Lastly, he who can say with *Christ Himself* in sincerity, when as brim-full of pain as his heart can hold, *Father, not my Will, but thy will be done* ; he who thus is enabled not only to embrace, but to choose the *Will* of God, and even then when it craseth His, he, I may say in some sense, is Θεὸς ὁντων a *Mortal God*, (as the old *Pythagoreans* were wont to phrase it,) that is a meer Man, with the *Image* and *Superscription* of God upon him ; a Man in *God's Likeness*, wherein his first Parents were first created. To sum up all in a word, He who wills what God wills, (be it taken by the right handle, and understood with a grain of Salt,) does make
 God's

God's Will become *his own*. He *carves an happiness to himself*, by that conformity of his Will to the Will of God. And his *Conversation* being incessantly in Heaven, (as St. Paul speaks to his *Philippians*,) he does in truth and without a figure, *enjoy an Heaven upon Earth too, in antecessum*. And this I think, in proper speaking, is to *Rejoyce evermore*.

§. IX. Thus I take my self to have proved St. Paul's Exhortative to be *Rational*, which some sensual *Apolausticks* would gladly have to be *Ridiculous*. 'Tis an Exhortative to nothing but what is *possible*, and *lawful*, and highly *laudable* in its Attainment. A Christian Duty *recommended*, if not *commanded* to be done, and *in the Doing of which there is great Reward*.

§. X. In the scope of this Text being thus explained, our Apostle's three Generals may be particularly apply'd to our *Rejoycing πάντοτε, always, or evermore, ἐν παντί in every thing, and ἀδιαλείπτως, without cessation, or intermission*. This is to *Rejoyce with Joy unspeakable*, 1 Pet. 1. 8. which is there also said to *be full of glory*; because the Joy of a sedate and a quiet Conscience, if it be in us, is not only *unexpressible* by our selves, but also *unvaluable by others*, as the most Learned Dr. Hammond does well explain it. So that here we may
ap-

apply that Epiphonema of St. *Paul*, *Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable Gift.* However spoken by St. *Paul* in another Case, namely that of *Alms-giving*, which is indeed the Gift of *God*, however express'd by and convey'd by the Hands of Men. And with a greater force of Reason may we apply it to our selves, in case we are blessed with the *Charisma* of *Rejoycing evermore*, in all conditions and events, which either *do* or *shall* befall us whilst we are Sojourners here on Earth. For an Ability to *rejoyce evermore* in this Sense, must needs be one of those *good and perfect Gifts*, which are said by St. *James* to be of a most Divine Extraction: It is a Gift *from above*, and James 1. 17. *cometh down from the Father of Lights.* And he may very well say, who hath arrived at this Ability, to *Rejoyce evermore*, in all conditions and events, πάντοτε *always*, ὡς παντὶ *in every thing*, and ἀσφαλώς, *without cessation*, or interruption; *Thanks be to God for his unspeakable Gift.*

§. XI. Saint *James* in his first Chapter to the *Jewish Christians* of the Disperſion, has several Instances of Inducement to our *Rejoycing evermore*, and that especially in our afflictions: *My brethren, count it all Joy when ye fall into diverse temptations*, (v. 2.) of which the best of Annotators does make this
Para-

Paraphrase, *Look upon it as the most blessed of all conditions that can befall you, (as the joyfuleſt thing imaginable,) that ye meet with afflictions, and thoſe of many ſorts and kinds, in your Chriſtian courſe.* So the ninth and tenth Verſes (ſaith the moſt Learned Dr. Hammond) cannot be better interpreted according to the ſenſe, than thus: *As glad as a poor man would be of being made rich, ſo glad let the rich man be of his being brought low. Let him be as well pleas'd, and thank God as heartily, for his being reduced to this low eſtate, as any poor creature is apt to be of any great Dignity or Preferment. Let the rich man look with joy on all the injuries and croſſes that can befall him.* All which is imported by St. James in theſe words, *Let the rich man rejoyce in his being made low; ſtill 'tis rejoycing in afflictions,* (not at all in proſperity,) to which St. James does well excite us in all that paſſage of his firſt Chapter, from the ſecond to the tenth Verſe. (See Dr. Hammond's Note on *Matth. 9. d.*)

§. XII. But to anticipate and frustrate ſuch Objections of the Fleſh, as will be naturally made by the Carnal-minded, we muſt ſtill carry in mind, (what I have already hinted in the beginning of my Diſcourſe,) that the Joy we take in ſuffering for having done any thing well,

well, or in a chearful submission to God's Oeconomy, in his Government of the World as *he* sees fit, is not to be a meerly *humane*, but *Christian* Joy; It must be a *Joy in the Holy Ghost*, (as St. Paul fitly calls it,) or to express it with St. Peter, a *Joy unspeakable, and full of glory*. For 'tis a poor Expression of Merri-
 ment which only flows from the Spleen and Midriff; and only makes a Man look, as if he were bitten with a *Tarantula*; and many times is no more than *Sardonick* Laughter, which being no deeper than the Face, is consistent with a weeping or heavy Heart: whereas the Rejoycing of a *Christian* which hath its warrant from *Christ himself*, and its Festival from the *Inside* or *Soul* of Man, is a solid, and a severe, and a serious thing; a thing that is permanent and fixt. It keeps a Man Company in his solitude; and yields him Comfort in his Afflictions; and reconciles his very pain with a secret Pleasure. The Prophet *Jeremie* enjoy'd it in *Jonathan's Dungeon*; and *Daniel* in the *Lions Den*. It stuck to St. Peter upon his *Cross*; and forsook not St. Paul in all his Sufferings, whereof he gives a kind of Inventory, in the *Eleventh Chapter* of his *Second Epistle to the Corinthians*. In his labours more abundant, in his stripes above measure, in his very frequent Prisons, in Deaths oft, in perils
 C of

Rom. 14. 17

of Waters, in perils of Robbers, in perils by his own Country-men, in perils by the Heathen, in perils in the City, in perils in the Wilderness, in perils by Sea, in perils among false Brethren, (which were the worse perils of all) *in Weariness and painfulness, in Watchings often, in Hunger and Thirst, in Fastings often, in Cold and Nakedness:* In these and all other distresses, of every kind, and in all degrees, his Inward Joy did not forsake him; his Peace of Conscience stuck closer to him, than his Skin to his Flesh, or his Flesh to his Bones; for *these* his several *Lictors* had the power to take from him. Five times was he scourged by the Lictors of the *Jews*, and that without Mercy, or Mitigation; and with a Rod of three branches, whereof each was of twisted whip-cord, (as *Maimonides* has informed us,) and so inflicted three stripes at every stroke. He was thrice beaten with Rods, that is, with switches or wands, by the Lictors of the Gentiles; once he was stone without a Process, by a tumultuous Rabble of Zealots; and tho' not unto Death, yet (which is worse) he was left for dead. (*Acts* 14. 19.) Three times at least *he suffered Shipwrack.* *A night and a day he was in the Deep,* that is, in a Prison of the *Propontis*, which was a most noisom and filthy pit, which for its depth under

 ground

ground was called *Buds*, that is, *the bottom of the Sea*: like that at *Athens*, called *Bαεινον*, or that at *Syracuse* called *The Mineral*. In every one of these cases the Joy of St. Paul never forsook him; but he *pray'd without ceasing, he rejoiced evermore, and in every thing gave thanks*. Nor is it a wonder that he rejoiced in the things, wherein he said *he took pleasure*: For that he did so is plain, 2 Cor. 12. 10. where when he said that he *took pleasure in Infirmities*, he explain'd what he meant in the very next words, by *Reproches, by Necessities, by Persecutions, by Distresses, for Christ's sake*. These expressly were the things in which he said *he took pleasure*; yea, these were the things in which he *boasted*, and in which he *gloried*, (v. 9.) *most gladly* (saith he) *will I glory in mine infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me*. 'Twas his *καυχνηα* and delight, *to bear about in his body the dying of the Lord Jesus*. In comparison with whom, he *reckoned all things but Dung*, and rejoiced to be reckoned himself as *Dung*, as the *Off-scourings of the Earth*, for the sake of CHRIST. He was *glad to be thought worthy to suffer Shame for CHRIST's sake*. Phil. 3. 8.

§. XIII. This is call'd with great Fitness *The Rejoycing of a Man's hope*, (Heb. 3. 6.) because the Hope we have in God, and our Re-

lyance upon *Him* for the performance of his Promises in the most unlikely Times, when all things round about us are most improsperous and adverse, is the *Ground and Foundation* of all a Christian Man's *Rejoycing*; and that as at all times so above all in *Times of Tryal*. To which St. Paul does give witness in the fifth Chap. to the Romans, from the second to the sixth Verse. *We rejoyce* (saith he) *in Hope of the Glory of God*; (v. 2.) *and not only so, But we glory in Tribulations*; (v. 3.) we are infinitely pleas'd with our present sufferings; tho' not reduplicative for sufferings sake; but *as knowing that Tribulation worketh Patience, and Patience Experience, and Experience Hope*, (v. 4.) *and Hope maketh not ashamed* (v. 5.) But on the contrary, thus hoping for the glory of God to be revealed, *καυχόμεθα*, *we boast, we glory, we rejoyce with exceeding Joy*, and that because *the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, by the same Holy Ghost which is given unto us*, (v. 5.) Which is as if he should have said, That however our afflictions are in their own nature tedious, yet they exercise many Vertues, as *Faith*, and *Patience*, and *Perseverance*, which are all required of us, and are deservedly to be shewn in the Cause of CHRIST. Besides that *Patience under Afflictions* is absolutely necessary for the *Tryal* of our *Sincerity*,
of

of which we cannot *well judge* without a *Tryal*, nor can we by Consequence, without it, have a safe Ground of *Hope*; which being rightly grounded upon a *Tryal* and *Proof* of our *Sincerity*, (in our adherence to JESUS CHRIST,) and rightly objected on his *Promises* revealed to us in the Gospel, can never prove a false or deceitful *Hope*; nor can we possibly miscarry, in our Dependence upon CHRIST for a *full Performance*. For 'tis not without sufficient Reason, that God is called *The God of Hope*; and that he is said to *fill* the Hearts of True Believers, *with all Joy and peace in their Believing*; and that by the *power of God the Holy Ghost*, Rom. 15. 13.

§. XIV. This I take to be the meaning of that seeming Paradox, (as 'tis a Paradox more than seeming to the Natural Man as Man) *καυχώμεθα*, we boast, we glory, *we exceedingly rejoyce in our Tribulations, and are wonderfully pleas'd with our present Sufferings*, (as Dr. Hammond words it expressly,) and that for the Reason before recited in the Fifth to the *Romans*, at the third, fourth and fifth Verses.

§. XV. There is a parallel place in the 12th. Chapter to the *Romans*, at the 12th. Verse, both with That I now cited, and with This of my Text to the *Thessalonians*; where *Rejoycing*

1 John 3. 3.

cing in hope is immediately followed with being *Patient in Tribulation*, and *continuing instant in Prayer*. Implying, that That Religious Hope which makes us *purifie our selves*, (as St. *John* describes it,) and is the Second of the Third *Theological* Graces, which is inseparably connected with *Faith*, and *Charity*; is not only the Ground of *Patience*, and *Prayer to God with Perseverance*, but even of *Joy*, and *Exultation*, in all the Crosses and Afflictions which can befall us; and so is a Proof of our Ability, (whilst this Divine Hope is in us,) to obey the Exhortation, and to perform the Christian Duty incumbent on us in my Text, which is to *Rejoyce evermore*, and *in every thing to be thankfull*.

§. XVI. This is briefly *That Joy*, which takes up its Residence in a Man's *Heart*, and there is established by his *Conscience*, a Conscience as quiet, as it is clean; a *Conscience void of Offence towards God and Man*. And this is that Peace of Conscience, which *Solomon* calls *A continual Feast*. Vicious Men may abound in a transient *Jollity*, but are capable of no true *Joy*: their Laughing and Quaffing is in good earnest but their Disease, which has a sting in the tail, when there is Honey in the Mouth. They may have Intervals and Truces, but no true Peace. They may

may indeed have a *Callousness*, or a *Searedness* of Conscience, but *Peace of Conscience* they have not, they cannot have. *There is no Peace, saith my God, to the wicked. Esaiah 57. 20.*

§. XVII. He who is bless'd with this Ability to *Rejoyce evermore*, will by consequence obey the two Exhortatives annext; *He will pray without ceasing*, and will *in every thing give thanks*. He will not only give thanks for his State of Grace, and his being *Gods Servant*, or *the Servant of Righteousness*; but also for his having been *the Servant of Sin*. For so he is taught by St. *Paul* to say, as he said unto the Christians who dwelt at *Rome*; *God be thanked, that ye were the Servants of Sin*; (*Rom. 6. 17.*) Where it is to be noted, in prevention of a Mistake in the weaker sort, (who may be bold to sin the more, that Grace may abound, and that he may have the more occasion to give God thanks, and may love him the more, the more he hath to be forgiven him,) St. *Paul* did not say, God be thanked that ye *are*, but that ye ** were* the Servants *Rom. 6. 17. of Sin: which is as if he should have said, God be thanked that ye are *not* the Servants of Sin, tho' once ye *were*: For it follows in the next words, *But ye have obeyed*, and obeyed *from the heart*, (not above board, and in open

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Shew only,) that form of Doctrine which was delivered unto you; and for that, God be thanked.

§. XVIII. This *Rejoycing evermore*, and *giving of Thanks* in all Conditions, especially in the most *Adverse*, (whether *Appointed*, or *Permitted*, by the good Providence of God,)

Compare
Heb. xi. with
Acts 9. 31.

Rom. 8. 28.

1 Pet. 2. 19,
20.

A world of Confessors and Martyrs have been convinced of being possible, by plain *experience*; and *Experience* is the *Great Mistress*, which will instruct the most stupid, and convince the most stubborn of her Disciples. The Experience I speak of is plainly this; that by the perpetual Blessing of God whereby the worst of all Evenements *work together for good to them that love God*. There is nothing adds more to a Man's Happiness upon Earth, than to be *injur'd* for his *Well-doing*; and *Envied* for his being *Blameless*; and bitterly *hated* by such as *God hates*; and for receiving *much evil*, for his Good offices, or his *Good will*. For to suffer such things, as these with Faith, and Patience, and Thanksgiving, is said by St. Peter to be *Thankworthy*, and a thing *Acceptable with God*. Whereas to suffer for Evil-doing, or to be commended for doing well, can never be said to be *Thankworthy*, and much less to be *Meritorious*.

§. XIX. If Transitory Comforters could
make

make us happy, it would be then a kind of Happiness to abound with Flatterers and Parasites, the greatest Comforters *for a time* this World can yield us; who yet are worthily esteemed the greatest *Plagues* too, because they are Comforters *but for a time*. And for this very reason, the goodliest possessions upon Earth, considered simply in themselves, are but glittering *Plagues*; because they are Flatterers and Parasites, which comfort us only *for a time*; and by *ceasing* at last to comfort, must needs *torment* us. But now the Holy Spirit of God, who is called *The Comforter* in the Gospel, is quite a contrary Comforter to all the Comforters I speak of. For when the *Secular* Comforters *forsake* us, *He takes us up*. His Comforts commonly *begin*, when all the rest are *perish'd* with us. He is παράκλητος μένων εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, that *Friendly* Comforter indeed, *who will abide with us for ever*, if we will but afford him an Entertainment, and not *resist* him at his Coming, nor *Grieve* him away when he is entered.

§. XX. Consider the *Promise* our Saviour made to his First Disciples, that *He would pray the Father who would give them another Comforter, even the Spirit of Truth, who should abide with them for ever*. And mark how well he *performed* his Promise: For

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when they were *Persecuted* and *Beaten* for having preached up CHRIST, they were so Inwardly strengthened by *the Holy Ghost the Comforter*, that what was cruelly intended to make them *sorry*, was miraculously made to increase their *Joy*: And their Rejoycing was even in This, that *they were counted worthy to suffer*; and to suffer the publick *Shame*, as well as the *Torments* of being *Beaten*, for their adhærence unto the *Name* of the Lord JESUS CHRIST. Vicious Pretenders to Religion, who are a *Disgrace* to Christianity, are not *worthy* to suffer for it. But those persecuted Apostles were of such wonderful great *Worth*, that *the Comforter from Heaven* was not only with them, but *within* their Hearts also. The nearest to them that was possible, when all the Comforts of the World stood farthest off; and who was able to make them able, not only to *support*, but even to *smile* on their Afflictions: Not only to *endure*, but over and above to *enjoy* their Sufferings. So we read of the *Thessalonians*, that they had received *the Word of God in much Affliction and Joy of the Holy Ghost*: The *Holy Ghost* being their *Comforter*, reconciled their Joy with their Afflictions. It was by the Holy Spirit of God that they *Rejoyced with Joy unspeakable*: And therefore Joy is worthily reckoned among

Acts 5. 40,
41.

1 Thess. 1.
6.

1 Pet. 1. 8.

among the *Fruits of the Spirit* in special Gal. 5 manner. The Fruits of the Spirit are very many; but *Love* and *Joy* are the two First, because he is eminently the *Spirit of Love*, and *Comfort*.

§.XXI. And now I have Answer'd the whole Objection of the most Sensual Apolausticks: prov'd it the *possible*, and the *lawful*, and *laudable* Practice of a true Christian, in the most terrible Cross of CHRIST, to be *still Rejoycing*. I have shew'd that *God Alone* is the *Paraclete*, or *Comforter* κατ' ἑξοχὴν. That He is the Wonderful Reconciler of *Joy* and *Sorrow*. That *Joy* is one of those *Fruits of the Blessed Spirit*, deeply *Rooted* in the *Heart* of a *True Believer*; that nothing can be more Orthodox than this Paradox of the Worldling; that 'tis the Duty, and the Reward, and the high Priviledge of a True Christian, (when all the rest of Mankind are Swallowed up in the Deepest Mourning,) *to rejoyce evermore, and in all Conditions*.

Which God the Father of his Goodness give us* Ability to perform, for the Merits of God ^{* 1 Cor. 10.} the Son, and by the Powerful Operation of God ^{13.} the Holy Ghost, Unto which Blessed and Glorious Trinity, *One Individual, Invisible, and Indivisible* Lord God, be All Honour and Adoration, both now, and for ever.